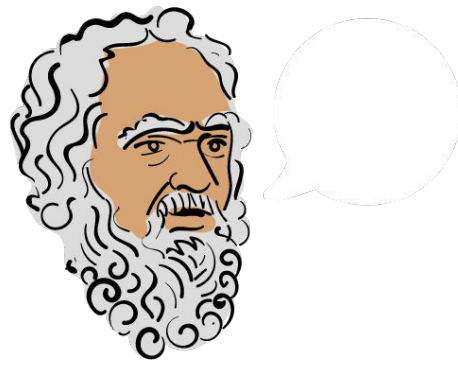


Socratic Discussion



What is a socratic discussion?



It is a type of discussion named after the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. Socrates was known for his great skill in argumentation.

“Argument” in this case doesn’t mean angry yelling; it means providing convincing support for an idea or opinion. You know—like a CERCA!

Key Features of a Socratic Discussion

Questioning

Questions are the most important part of a Socratic discussion.

Assumptions

Assumptions are ideas people accept as true, even though others might not share that same certainty.

Listening

Listening is a crucial part of a Socratic discussion.

Connecting

The goal of a Socratic discussion is to build a network of ideas around the main discussion question.

Questioning

In a Socratic discussion, the facilitator starts by asking a “big” question. The main discussion question is an open-ended question that has a lot of possible answers.

Participants then develop their responses by asking questions of one another. These detailed questions help the participants make their responses to the main discussion question clearer and better understood.

Assumptions

Participants also explore questions about one another's assumptions about the topic and assumptions implied in the main discussion question.

Listening

The facilitator listens carefully to the participants. That way he or she knows what questions to ask next.

In a Socratic discussion, everyone listens with the goal of learning about others' ideas.

They do not listen with the goal of "winning," like they would in a debate.

During the discussion, participants contribute and show that they are listening to one another. They agree or disagree, clarify, and build on ideas.

Connecting

Participants help others understand their thinking by connecting their ideas to evidence and reasoning.

Participants listen carefully to connect their ideas to other ideas they heard in discussion.

The facilitator uses guiding questions to connect different ideas.

Examples of Follow Up Questions

Try using some of these questions and statements in discussion:

Can you say more about that?

What part of the text connects with that idea?

What do you think of [_____]’s point?

I agree with you because [_____].

I disagree with the part where you said

[_____] because [_____].

Let's do it!